

dedicated men and women who choose to serve in the Guard and Reserve.

If we continue to ask these troops to do more with less, more operations and contingencies with less equipment, less training and fewer troops, we will see significant problems with recruiting, retaining the same caliber people that we choose to serve in this All Volunteer Force. Our Armed Forces, Mr. Speaker, are more than just Active Forces. They are a total force component comprised of Active, Reserve and Guard members.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to call on my colleagues to join me in support of educational standards of excellence for our Nation's students and parents and communities. As a former State superintendent of schools in North Carolina, I have seen firsthand how much progress can be achieved when we aim high in education and give our children and teachers the tools they need to get the job done. I call on this House to go on record in favor of this commonsense approach to improving education in America.

Last week I participated in an educational town hall meeting with the Vice President in my home area. The voice I heard from North Carolina students and citizens came through loud and clear. An America needs educational standards of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I have drafted legislation in support of voluntary standards of educational excellence. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation.

BE FAIR TO OUR NATION'S POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I will be introducing a bill that is aimed at benefiting our Nation's police officers and firefighters. My bill will rescind the dollar limitation on police and firefighter benefit laws allowing these employees to collect the money that they have rightfully earned by contributing to their benefit fund, to their pension fund.

Currently, under section 415 of the Tax Code, police officers and firefighters are not eligible to collect the funds that they have earned and instead are required to retire with benefits generally based on the percentage of their highest 3-year salary average. Regrettably the average in most instances does not exceed 65 or 75 percent. Thus many officers living along the east coast or in large metropolitan

and surrounding suburban areas throughout our Nation are forced to work past their general retirement age in order to afford the high cost of living in these areas.

This bill will not initiate a tax revenue loss. In fact, under my bill, we would gain Federal revenues due to the disbursement of previously uncollected funds to retirees.

I invite my colleagues to support this measure. Let us be fair to those who day in and day out place their lives on the line for our protection.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop the political games. The Republican leadership's failure to pass a clean supplemental appropriations bill is denying our troops in the field the resources they need to carry out their mission. The supplemental appropriations bill provides \$2 billion to pay for our operation in Bosnia. If we do not enact this bill swiftly, their readiness will suffer.

I am holding letters from Secretary of Defense Cohen, and the Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force, which describe the effects on the military of the Republicans' failure to pass a clean bill. Training is curtailed. Maintenance is delayed. Rotations are canceled. Inventories are drained. Our soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen need a clean supplemental appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, there is a time for partisan politics and there is a time to put it aside. But when Americans are hit by a natural disaster, we must act together and act quickly. When American troops need our help, we must do our job and do it today.

Let us support our troops in Bosnia and our people at home. Pass a clean supplemental.

VOTE "NO" ON CAMPBELL-GREENWOOD

(Mr. SMITH of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today two diametrically opposed resolutions will be on the floor, in the next order of business dealing with population control. The Campbell-Greenwood substitute, which is a substitute to a bill or amendment that I am offering along with the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HYDE], and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BARCIA], promotes abortion on demand overseas and not family planning.

The Campbell-Greenwood amendment does not add any pro-life conditions to current law. Rather, it blurs the distinction between abortion and

family planning in U.S.-supported programs overseas. It allows U.S. dollars to go to the U.N. Population Fund, the UNFPA, even though that organization continues to support China's brutally enforced one-child-per-couple policy, and to nongovernmental organizations that are engaged in a crusade for abortion on demand around the world.

My amendment does not reduce family planning by even one penny. It conditions those funds to those organizations that are all about family planning and not about abortion promotion. I urge a "no" vote on the Campbell-Greenwood, a "yes" vote on Smith-Barcia-Hyde-Oberstar.

IN OPPOSITION TO REPUBLICAN AMENDMENTS TO DISASTER RELIEF BILL

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, there are people in the Midwest who are suffering. Their homes have been destroyed by floods and they need our help. The Democrats in Congress have an emergency spending bill that will help them put their shattered lives back together.

We want to help these victims but the Republicans will not let us.

Instead, the Republicans are attaching language to a flood relief bill that would stop an accurate count of minorities in the census. The Republicans are so afraid of an accurate count of minorities that they are willing to let flood victims suffer.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans do not mind playing politics with the American people. They already shut down the Federal Government twice. Now they are fiddling while the Midwest drowns.

THE NEED TO FUND FEDERAL JUDGESHIPS IN MIDDLE FLORIDA

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to make my colleagues aware of a crisis existing in the middle district of Florida. The current Federal case load is one of the worst in the country. The population continues to increase. If no additional judgeships are approved, by 2005 there will be only one-third of the State's Federal judges assigned to two-thirds of the State's population.

As case loads increase, current judges cannot simply shoulder the additional burden. By failing to create additional positions, we are producing a backlog of cases, increasing legal costs for citizens and undermining the Federal courts.

Lately much attention has been focused on getting tough on crime. We must remember the only path from indictment to incarceration is through the judiciary. It must receive adequate